



A STUDY OF ALTRUISTIC BEHAVIOR OF PUPIL-TEACHERS AND THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARDS ENVIRONMENT

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ABSTRACT

In the present paper an attempt has been made to explore if altruistic behavior influences the attitude towards environment of pupil-teachers. Also it was studied as to what extent the educational background of pupil-teachers affects their altruistic behavior and the attitude towards environment. Altruism is feeling or acting on behalf of the welfare of others in cases where self-interest could not be involved. Altruistic behaviors are associated with greater well-being, health, and longevity. It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself (Ralph Waldo Emerson). It is a combination of benevolence, charity, compassion, and friendship, and includes pro-social behaviors. Teacher having a key role of shaping the future generation is expected to have a balanced attitude about developing compassion and benevolence with the environment as a whole i.e. the external and internal. In this regard a conscious effort has been made through the verdict of Supreme Court that teacher education curriculum must encompass the essential elements related to education for sustainable development. In the present study it was attempted to reveal that how far the teacher education programme has been effective in developing this aspect of environmental education. To have the empirical evidence 72 students studying in two year B.Ed. course in RIE Bhopal have been identified and administered a test for altruism developed by Penny Jain and an attitude scale towards environmental education developed by R.R. Singh. The data gathered was subjected to statistical analysis and it was found that there was a positive correlation between environmental attitude and altruistic behavior.

KEYWORDS: Altruistic Behavior, Environment, ESD.

INTRODUCTION

The term altruism coined by Auguste Comte in 1851 is feeling or acting on behalf of the welfare of others in cases where self-interest is not involved. In other words, human behavior that represents an unselfish desire to 'live for others'. The basic difference that distinguishes altruism from egoism is the motive that leads to the particular action. Altruistic behavior is associated with greater well-being, health, and longevity. It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself (Ralph Waldo Emerson). It is a combination of benevolence, charity, compassion, and friendship, and includes pro-social behaviors. The environment is the aggregate of all the conditions that support living things. In turn, living things, including humans, are all interactive parts of the environment. Environmental education refers to the integrated study of the natural, living, and physical environment and humans' interactions with it.

Sustainable development refers to a process for meeting human developmental goals while sustaining the ability of natural systems to continue to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services upon which the economy and society depends. Sustainable development is the organizing principle for sustaining finite resources necessary to provide for the needs of future generations of life on the planet. Realizing education as a potential instrument of social change, the National Policy on Education, 1986 made Environmental Education a part of the general education at all levels, in particular at the school level. Teacher having a key role of shaping the future generation is expected to have a balanced attitude about developing compassion and benevolence with the environment as a whole i.e. the external and internal. In this regard a conscious effort has been made through the verdict of Supreme Court (Hon'ble Supreme Court Directive - 2003) that teacher education curriculum must encompass the essential elements related to education for sustainable development. Based on the significance of introducing environmental education in teacher education, the National Council of Teacher Education has made an attempt to develop a curriculum framework in Environmental Education for the four levels of teacher preparation, viz., Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), Elementary teacher training, Secondary and Senior Secondary and Vocational education. In the present study, it was attempted to examine how far the teacher education programme has been effective in developing the aspect of environmental education and as Batson(2011) points out that "an altruistic act is one whose ultimate aim is to further another's wellbeing. The present paper makes an attempt to explore the altruistic behavior of pupil-teachers and their attitude towards the environment.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The researcher identified a number of studies that were conducted earlier in the area and reviewed the relevant material available. Some of the studies pertaining to the topic are presented below.

Dunlap and Gallup (1992) in a study "health of the planet" surveyed approximately 1,000 people in each of 24 countries, which ranged widely in economic development, political structure, and geographic region. The countries were divided into industrialized nations (Denmark, Germany, Finland, Norway, Can-

ada, Ireland, Switzerland, USA, Netherlands, Japan, Great Britain, and Portugal) and developing nations (Mexico, Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, Korea, Philippines, Poland, Russia, Hungary, India, Turkey, and Nigeria). When asked which should be given priority economic growth or environment-more than 50% chose environment in 21 of the 24 countries. Only India (43%), Turkey (43%), and Nigeria (30%) favored economic growth over environmental protection.

Popp, D (1999) conducted a study on "Altruism and the Demand for Environmental Quality" with the objective to determine whether people are altruistically motivated in the provision of public goods. The paper focused on protection of the environment for future generations. The study used survey data to develop a test for altruism in the valuation of environmental amenities. In particular, the paper developed a test for the hypothesis that current generations are willing to altruistically preserve the environment for future generations. Two tests were developed: one for strong altruism, in which only the societal benefits matter in an individual's willingness to pay, and one for weak altruism, in which individuals show concern for both their own self-interest and the welfare of future generations. The results showed that altruism does play a role in the valuation of environmental amenities.

Schultz (2002) in a study on "Environmental Attitudes and Behaviors Across Cultures" found that the attitudes of people from all of these countries (United States, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, and Spain) can be classified as egoistic (concerns are focused on the individual, and reflect a concern about environmental problems for self. These concerns include personal health, financial well-being, quality of life, and availability of resources), altruistic (concerns focus on people other than self, including friends, family, community, future generations, or humanity) or biospheric (concerns focus on all living things, including plants, animals, ecosystems, and the biosphere). That is, the tri-partite classification system captures the way in which people think about environmental problems. Yet even within countries, there were differences in the attitudes of respondents. The findings further revealed that there are clear differences across countries in the level of concern, and in the overall level of egoistic, altruistic, and biospheric attitudes. The final finding which emerged from these studies is the relationship between values and attitudes of environmental concern. The results of the research indicated that values focused on the individual are associated with egoistic attitudes about environmental issues, while values focused outside the self are associated with more altruistic and biospheric attitudes. That is, value self-enhancing goals (like power, wealth, success, or personal ambition) are associated with more egoistic environmental attitudes. In contrast, values that transcend the self (like broad-minded, honesty, forgiving, or loyalty) are associated with more biospheric environmental attitudes.

Dhawan, Rawat and Sharma(2005) conducted a study of environmental knowledge, awareness and attitude of pupil-teachers of Garhwal University before and after B.Ed. training. The main objectives of the study were: to compare the environmental knowledge, awareness and attitude of pupil-teachers of Garhwal University before and after B.Ed. training; to investigate the effectiveness of syllabus of environmental education in the B.Ed. course of Garhwal University

before and after B.Ed. training. The major findings of the study were that the pupil-teachers before the training had less environmental knowledge, awareness and attitude as compared to the after training; significant positive correlation was observed between the environmental knowledge and awareness of pupil-teachers before the training and after the training; there was moderate correlation between environmental knowledge and environmental attitude before as well as after training.

Liu and Lin (2015) in a study entitled "Exploring Undergraduate Students' Mental Models of the Environment: Are They Related to Environmental Affect and Behavior" found that Taiwanese students generally held incomplete mental models of the environment focusing on objects rather than processes or relations. Correlations revealed that students who had higher mental model scores tended to demonstrate higher levels of emotional connection and positive commitment to the environment. The findings revealed that a holistic and systemic view of the environment plays an important role in promoting pro-environmental attitudes and behavior.

Considering the research studies carried out in the past the author realized that there is a scope of further study in this area specifically how the above two variables i.e. Altruistic Behavior (Al B) and Attitude Towards Environment (ATB) interacts with each other in case of pupil-teachers. Accordingly a research study namely "a study of altruistic behavior of pupil-teachers and their attitude towards environment" has been formulated.

KEYTERMS

Altruistic Behavior

Altruism is feeling or acting on behalf of the welfare of others in cases where self-interest could not be involved. Altruistic behaviors are associated with greater well-being, health, and longevity. It is a combination of benevolence, charity, compassion, and friendship, and includes pro-social behaviors. An altruistic act is one whose ultimate aim is to further another's wellbeing (Batson).

Environment

The environment is the aggregate of all the conditions that support living things. In turn, living things, including humans, are all interactive parts of the environment.

Education for Sustainable Development(ESD)

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is the adaptation of understanding of related behavior leading to the sustainable development of resources.

OBJECTIVES

- To study the relationship between altruistic behavior of pupil-teachers and their attitude towards environment.
- To compare the altruistic behaviour of pupil-teachers having different educational backgrounds.
- To compare the attitude towards environment of pupil-teachers having different educational background.

HYPOTHESES

Based on the reviews carried out the following null hypotheses have been formulated which will be subjected for test of significance.

- H₀1:** There will be no significant relationship between altruistic behavior of pupil-teachers and their attitude towards environment.
- H₀2:** There will be no significant difference between altruistic behaviour of pupil-teachers with different educational background.
- H₀3:** There will be no significant difference between the attitude towards environment of pupil-teachers having different educational background.

METHODOLOGY

The sample of present study consisted of 72 students of two year teacher preparation course of RIE Bhopal that was selected randomly out of 160 students enrolled in the course. The variables – altruistic behavior was assessed through a tool developed by Penny Jain consisting of 25 items with 3 point Likert scale while the attitude towards environment was assessed with the help of tool developed by R.R. Singh. The above scale had 32 items both positive and negative and their response was obtained through a 5 point Likert scale.

The data was collected from the sampled pupil-teachers after joining the said course. The tools were administered simultaneously to pupil-teachers of different backgrounds in classroom setup. Statistical analysis such as coefficient of correlation using Pearson's product moment method was used to study the relationship between altruistic behavior of pupil-teachers and their attitude towards environment while the two groups i.e. students with Science-Maths (SM) background and Social Science-Humanities (SH) background were compared for attitude towards environment and altruistic behavior using t-test.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESES:

H₀1: There will be no significant relationship between Altruistic Behavior (Al B) of pupil-teachers and their Attitude Towards Environment (ATE)

Table 1
Relationship between altruistic behavior and attitude towards environment

S.No.	Variables	(r)	Significant/Non-Significant
1	Al B	0.79*	
2	ATE		p>0.23

* Value of 'r' is significant at 0.05 level of confidence.

Tabular value required at 0.05 level was 0.23 at point .05 level with 70 df

The data presented in table 1 reveals a significant and positive coefficient of correlation between altruistic behavior and attitude towards environment of sampled pupil-teachers. It implies that with increase in altruistic scores the corresponding scores of attitude of pupil-teachers also increases and vice versa.

H₀2: There will be no significant difference between altruistic behavior of pupil-teachers with different educational background.

The pupil-teachers with different backgrounds were compared on their altruistic behaviors. The data in this regard is presented in table 2.

Table 2
Difference between mean scores on Altruistic behavior of pupil-teachers with different background

S.No.	Variables	Mean	SD	Mean Difference	SEM1-M2	t- value
1	Al B of SM group	61.86	6.81	1.03	1.72	0.599* < 2.00
2	Al B of SH group	60.83	7.75			

* Value of 't' is insignificant at 0.05 level of confidence.

Tabular value required at 0.05 level was 2.00 at point .05 level with 71 df

The data presented in table 2 reveals that there is no significant difference between altruistic behavior of pupil-teachers with Science-Maths and Social Science- Humanities background.

H₀3: There will be no significant difference between the attitude towards environment of pupil-teachers having different educational background

The pupil-teachers with different backgrounds were compared with respect to their attitude towards environment. The data in this regard is presented in table 3.

Table 3
Difference between mean scores on Attitude towards environment of pupil-teachers with different background

S.No.	Variables	M	SD	Mean Difference	SEM1-M2	t- value
1	ATE of SM group	59.44	5.73	2.91	1.52	1.92 < 2.0
2	ATE of SH group	56.53	7.07			

* Value of 't' is insignificant at 0.05 level of confidence.

Tabular value required at 0.05 level was 2.0 at point .05 level with 71 df

The data presented in table 3 reveals that there is no significant difference between the attitude towards environment of pupil-teachers with Science-Maths and Social Science- Humanities background.

FINDINGS

- The findings revealed that there was a positive correlation between environmental attitude and altruistic behaviour.
- The findings revealed that there was no significant difference between altruistic behaviour of pupil-teachers having different educational backgrounds.
- The findings revealed that there was no significant difference between the attitude towards environment of pupil-teachers having different educational background.

CONCLUSIONS

Within the limitations of the present study and based on major findings it may be concluded that the altruistic behavior leads to the development of high attitude

towards environment. This phenomenon may be attributed to the basic element of altruism i.e. selflessness and concern for others as a driving force.

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